



St Michael's Pre-School

The role of the Key Person and Settling in Policy

Policy statement

We want children to feel safe, stimulated and happy in the pre-school and to feel secure and comfortable with staff. We also want parents to have confidence in both their children's well-being and their role as active partners with the pre-school.

We feel that children settle best when they have a key person to relate to who knows them and their parents well and who can meet their individual needs.

- The key person role is set out in the welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- At St Michael's pre-school we work closely as a team. Therefore, if your child's key person is unavailable you can feel free to speak to any member of staff or Maggie or Tina.

Aim

We aim to make the pre-school a welcoming place where the transition journey from home/other setting is made as smoothly as possible. This is done by the key person approving with the parent a mutually acceptable settling in strategy.

Procedure

- Before a child starts to attend the pre-school, we use a variety of ways to provide parents with information. These include written information and individual visits. However, we do have an open door policy so that a parent/child can visit the setting at any time.
- We send out 'All About Me' forms before your child starts at pre-school so that we can find out as much about your child and his/her family as possible. The information gathered from this form will enable us to plan for your child from Day 1 and help us with the continued assessment of your child by their key person.
- We allocate a key person to each child before they start at the setting; the key person along with all staff welcomes and looks after your child at the first session and during the settling in process.
- We require children to attend a minimum of two sessions per week to assist in the settling-in process.

- The key person is responsible for developmental records and for sharing information on a regular basis with the child's parents to keep those records up-to-date, reflecting the full picture of the child in our setting and at home
- We have an expectation that the parent, carer or close relative, will stay for most of the sessions during the first week, gradually taking time away from their child, increasing this as and when the child is able to cope.
- Younger children will take longer to settle in, as will children who have not previously spent time away from home. Children who have had a period of absence may also need their parent to be on hand to re-settle them.
- We judge a child to be settled when they have formed a relationship with their key person/pre-school team and will go to them for comfort, and seem pleased to be with them. The child is also familiar with where things are and is pleased to see other children and participate in activities.
- When parents leave, we ask them to say goodbye to their child and explain that they will be coming back and when.
- We do not believe that leaving a child to cry will help them to settle any quicker. We believe that a child's distress will prevent them from learning and gaining the best from pre-school.
- We reserve the right not to accept a child into the setting without a parent or carer if the child finds it distressing to be left. This is especially the case with very young children.

The progress check at age two

- The key person carries out the progress check at age two, when the child has settled (this can be up to six weeks), in accordance with any local procedures that are in place and referring to the guidance A Know How Guide: The EYFS progress check at age two.
- The progress check aims to review the child's development and ensures that parents have a clear picture of their child's development.
- Within the progress check, the key person will note areas where the child is progressing well and identify areas where progress is less than expected.
- The progress check will describe the actions that will be taken by the setting to address any developmental concerns (including working with other professionals where appropriate) as agreed with the parent(s).
- The key person will plan activities to meet the child's needs within the setting and will support parents to understand the child's needs in order to enhance their development at home.

This Policy was adopted at a meeting of all staff at St Michael's Pre-School.